

**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
August 25, 2010, 4:30p.m.
Council Chambers**

PRESENT	ABSENT
Greg Lewis Rosalind Pegram Shiva Rallapalli John Roberts John Stroh	Rhea Baker-Ipek Trena Carter Ian Kohen Tony McClendon Gil Palmer

UNOFFICIAL MEETING – NO QUORUM

GUESTS PRESENT:

Kristi Putnam and Thom Weintraut

STAFF PRESENT:

Director Arlette Cooper Tinsley, Deputy Director Lorraine Smith, and Secretary Lula Young.

SECRETARY’S REPORT:

Roll call. Due to informational status of meeting, the July 2010 minutes were held for quorum approval.

TREASURER’S REPORT:

No report.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT:

No report.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Director Tinsley advised Commissioners there were no updates regarding the budget and that City Council members would vote on the budget in September.

Director Tinsley informed Commissioners that staff members continue to be busy with increased intakes. Both walk-in and telephone inquiries have noticeably increased. She went on to inform Commissioners about the current complaint that was filed jointly with EEOC and is in EEOC mediation. Director Tinsley advised that the mediation process is being handled by EEOC Mediator, Kathy Campbell. Ms. Campbell, who is in direct contact with both parties, provides regular updates on the status of the mediation.

Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming Literacy Task Force Spelling Bee and that the ‘Human Writer’s – the Sequel’ team consisting of Commissioners Rallapalli, Lewis, Roberts and Palmer would be representing the Commission. Commissioner Pegram requested a spectator ticket to attend with the Director and Deputy Director to support the Commission team. Discussion ensued.

Director Tinsley announced upcoming training opportunities being provided by The Heritage Fund. Commissioners were informed that the Commission could financially support the training for three (3) or more board members to attend the simultaneous board retreat. Further discussion of trainings continued as Director Tinsley announced that she would be providing student rights and privacy issues training to Debbie Thomas' ESL staff the following week and that Deputy Director Smith had recently conducted a fair housing training for a local apartment complex. The deputy director advised that the outreach surveys received from participants were very helpful and attendees of the training were very engaged. Director Tinsley added that since Commissioner Baker-Ipek attended the training, she may be able to present the training in the future in accordance with the Six Sigma plan.

OPEN FORUM:

The Commission recognized and congratulated Commissioner John Roberts and Thomas Weintraut on their recent nuptials. Discussion on current legislation regarding same-sex marriages and societal attitudes ensued.

Commissioner Roberts announced that Tri-State University had changed their name to Trine University and will be opening a satellite campus in Columbus within Harrison College. He advised that Trine University will offer Health, Emergency Management and many other bachelor degree programs. He also advised that the University would provide substantial tuition savings to Ivy Tech students. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Rallapalli shared his experience of receiving a text message with a song attached that was racially negative towards African-Americans. He informed attendees that although law enforcement officers were able to locate the sender, nothing could be done legally beyond the detective issuing a warning to the sender. Discussion ensued.

OTHER BUSINESS – Ad Hoc Committee Update:

Commissioner Rallapalli informed Commissioners that with research received from committee members, responses to acts of hate should be customized to the local community. He advised that he is in the process of customizing a skeletal plan on dealing with local hate crime incidents and issues. Discussion ensued.

LIAISON UPDATE – IMMIGRATION (LATINO) ISSUES GROUP:

Commissioner Pegram advised Commissioners that Su Casa reported serving fewer Latino residents than in previous months. She also advised that the local courts appeared to be dealing with fewer cases as the court translator scheduling had decreased from 6 hours down to 1 or 2 hours each week.

Commissioner Pegram requested feedback concerning a legal issue involving undocumented resident fathers being required to show documentation before being allowed to establish paternity of newborns. She advised that families are looking at between \$600- \$1,000 in tests and court fees to establish paternity. Discussion involving immigration and tax law ramifications ensued.

OTHER BUSINESS – Annual Dinner Evaluations:

Director Tinsley informed Commissioners that Lula was in the process of gathering information regarding the Commissioners' desire to provide a ticket for guests to attend only the presentation portion of the dinner and asked for this topic to be tabled.

LIAISON UPDATE – C.A.M.E.O.:

Deputy Director Smith announced that the next C.A.M.E.O. meeting was scheduled for September 8, 2010, and that Commissioner Roberts would be doing a primer on Roberts Rules of Order for the C.A.M.E.O. board.

She continued by advising that the Pakistan Association would be participating in the Community Book Read with a kick-off date of September 6th at the library. The book, 3 Cups of Tea, is about a mountain climber that had an epiphany and started building schools for girls all over Pakistan. The activity will be posted on the C.A.M.E.O. website soon.

LEGAL UPDATE:

Director Tinsley provided Commissioners with a written legal update and highlighted the **Dukes v. Wal-Mart** case. She pointed out that it is the largest class-action suit in history and that the case has been pending since 1997. The Director shared a local connection to this case as one of the main plaintiffs worked in Decatur County and Indianapolis and that in the suit one Plaintiff described how she was forced to attend Personnel meetings at Hooter's and getting demoted.

Other points highlighted from the Director's Legal Update included that increased enforcement activity is projected within the Dept. of Justice, Dept. of Labor and EEOC. She also advised that OFCCP (Office of Federal Contract Compliance) has been resurrected. Discussion ensued.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned.